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The situation in the Middle East

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Sixty-first year

Letter dated 19 July 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the dangerous developments resulting from the military attacks being carried out by the Government of Israel against the Lebanese Republic.

In this connection, I attach hereto a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba (see annex).

I should be grateful if you could arrange for this letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 14, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Rodolfo **Benitez Verson**
Counsellor
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 19 July 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba has noted with deep concern the new large-scale military operation launched by Israel on 12 July, this time against the Lebanese Republic, resulting in dozens of civilians killed, the destruction of the country's infrastructure, including the runways of the Beirut International Airport, and the severe disruption of water and electricity supplies to the civilian population.

The Government of Israel has also imposed a quarantine by sea and air on the entire country and has openly and explicitly threatened to continue its aggression and to demolish the suburbs to the south of the Lebanese capital, in another demonstration of its well-known genocidal policy against the Arab peoples.

As Cuba has denounced on countless previous occasions, Israel, in violation of all the norms of international law, is once again engaged in military aggression against a sovereign country under the spurious pretext of "protecting its security", with the economic and military support and the flagrant and unconscionable complicity of the Government of the United States of America, which assures the impunity of the aggressor regime and steadfastly blocks with its veto any condemnation of Israel by the Security Council of the United Nations. This situation is compounded by the shameful and cowardly passivity of the European Union.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba vigorously condemns this brutal military Israeli aggression against the Lebanese Republic and calls upon the international community and all peace-loving forces to mobilize in demanding that Israel put an immediate end to these barbarous acts, to return the occupied territories to Lebanon, and to respect the most elementary norms of international law.

In this critical period, Cuba reaffirms its complete solidarity with the people of Lebanon, who, together with the heroic people of Palestine, are once again suffering today from the naked and cynical aggression of the regime in Tel Aviv.

Havana, 14 July 2006